TRIBUNALS OF COMMERCE.

The International Exhibition has come and gone, but, so far as we are aware, not much progress has been made towards the organization of tribunals of commerce throughout the country, or even in the metropolis. Powerful influences may be brought to bear against them; yet we hope that so great a public good, however much evil it may be supposed to bring to a single class of the community, the lawyers, will ere long be firmly and universally established in every commercial city and town throughout the empire. The assistant secretary to the committee of the Tribunals of Commerce (Mr. E. H. Stanley) has just published* a little sixpenny pamphlet, titled "What are Tribunals of Commerce?" addressed to the commercial community, which seems well adapted to promote the end in view. "It was shown by Mr. J. MacGregor, M.P. for Glasgow," he states, on p. 14 of this publication, "that the Tribunals, of Commerce in France settled more cases in *one day* than all the civil tribunals did in a month: thus the average duration of such cases might be fairly calculated. Before these tribunals every one should be allowed to plead his own cause and examine his opponent as to facts, and also to call witnesses if desirable, although in most instances there are no witnesses to commercial transactions, except the two parties concerned. It should be optional to employ counsel; but as his technical knowledge would be of no avail, his services would, perhaps, not be sought for. In the Stock Exchange, where a Tribunal of Commerce has existed upwards of fifty years, all questions are decided upon justice and not law; and there is no instance of any appeal from the decision of the committee in existence. All railway companies make any disputes dependent on the decision of their engineers and others, *i. e.* the principle of Tribunals of Commerce. An Arbitration Court is not exactly a Tribunal of Commerce, because the one is optional, the other must be binding by Act of Parliament. You cannot compel a rogue to arbitration: you could oblige him to come before the tribunals; and to gain such tribunals depends solely and entirely upon you who are engaged in commerce."

BRUMMAGEM ARCHITECTS' CHARGES.

In the case of *Taylor* v. *Stephenson*, mentioned by you last week, you, in the depths of your simplicity, say, "If this (2½ per cent.) BE the usual commission, the Birmingham architects must be getting rich." Why, bless your simple heart, Mr. Editor, you do not for a moment suppose that 2½ per cent. is ALL we get? No, no! We are sharp, keen, wide-awake fellows, we Birmingham architects. We have an idea that by charging *low* for our services, we, as it is with any other trade, get more business; but then, you see, there is such a thing as being "paid by bricklayers and carpenters for our services."

There is an old adage, which says, "when the eye does not see, the heart does not grieve;" and if we do, instead of charging 5 per cent., say but 2½ per cent., I suppose it is possible to add the difference in commission, and now and then something *more*, on to the builder's account: we get the money, and our employers, *not knowing anything about it*, are perfectly satisfied: so what does it matter?

Many are simple enough to suppose that, to be an architect, it is necessary to have been properly educated, and to go through the regular routine of an office. Nothing of the sort! I never did anything else than plane a few floor-boards,—and my master told me I had not sense enough to do that well, and kept me at that for the whole term of my apprenticeship; but the fact was, I had a soul above it; and being tolerably well up in arithmetic, and able to tell the difference between Ionic and Gothic, and to draw a plan, I thought myself fully qualified to write "Architect" to the end of my name; and here I am, an ARCHITECT and SURVEYOR, and get a better living at it, I assure you, than I ever could have done as a carpenter.

Some architects in our town, who affect to look down upon such as I,—foolish sticklers for honour, uprightness of conduct, and all that sort of humbug, of which I know nothing, continue to persist in charging their 5 per cent.; but then they have had to pay pretty dear for what knowledge they have (a great deal of which is quite unnecessary—witness me), and have, as they say, a reputation to support, but that's "all my eye."

Neither are we architects the only sharp people in Birmingham, for our town council, when they require gaols, lunatic asylums, and other corporate buildings erected, are too good judges of the value of money and an architect's services, to pay 5 per cent., but advertise for those who will make designs and superintend the works at the cheapest rate: the result is they get their work for half what they would have to pay to one of the above-mentioned "honourable men;" but they are well pleased, so what does it matter?

I consider, Mr. Editor, you and your readers will owe me a good turn for thus "putting you up to a thing or two," and showing you how we do it in smoky "Brum," and that this communication ought not to have been made without a pretty good fee; but having the good of the profession in view, I present it gratis, hoping you will profit by it.

A KNOWING "BRUMMAGEM"
ARCHITECT.

* Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange.

THE DIOCESAN TRAINING INSTITUTION FOR SCHOOLMISTRESSES AT DERBY.

On Wednesday in week before last the Diocesan Institution for the Training of Schoolmistresses, in Derby, was inaugurated by the Bishop of Lichfield, and a large assemblage of the resident clergy. The mayor and a numerous body of the local gentry were also present.

The building has been recently finished. It stands on the Uttoxeter road with its principal front and main entrance to the south. The length of this front is about 100 feet, and the depth from south to North is about 45 feet. The style of design adopted by the architect, Mr. Stevens, is that of the period of James I.: it presents a complete façade on all sides, with pinnacles, breaks, and angles. The general structure is of brick, while the door pieces and window mouldings are of hewn stone, and belts of encaustic tile run round the whole at the junction of the different stories, and numerous panels of the same material decorate portions of the different fronts. These tiles, together with the tesselated pavement of the corridors and the mosaic floor of the entrance hall, according to the *Derby Mercury*, were the gift of Mr. H. Minton, who also contributed 100*l.* to the institution.

The entrance-hall leads directly to the principal corridor, by which it is transversely crossed. The roof of the hall is a combination of semi-circular groined arches, supported in the centre by a stone pillar. The dining-room, or refectory, facing the hall on the right, measures 28 feet in length by 19 in breadth. On the same floor are the chaplain's room, waiting-rooms, class-rooms, sitting apartments, &c. The second and upper floors are occupied by bed-rooms, hospital-rooms, and other dormitories, bath-rooms, lavatories, &c.

The general ventilation is secured by air-flues, opening into a central ventilating shaft; and there is an open fire in each apartment. The corridors and staircases are heated by Price's apparatus. A fall in the ground towards the north secured a basement or sunk story without the expense of excavation. In this floor there is a corridor corresponding to those above; the south side of which is occupied by an extensive range of cellars, &c., while its north side gives entrance to store-rooms, kitchens, &c.

The contract was taken by Mr. George Thompson. The entire cost of the building, site, and furniture, is nearly 7,000*l.* The funds to meet this outlay will be raised in the following manner:—Grant from Committee of Council, 2,000*l.*; ditto from National Society, 400*l.* The remaining 4,600*l.* provided by subscription throughout the diocese.

COMPETITION ARCHITECTURE.

Observing in your paper of the 11th inst. an extract from some old work, headed "Competition Sculpture," I presume that the following short extract, from a journal of the same date, may not be otherwise than acceptable. It forms a kind of series on art, and that which follows is styled—"Advice to ye young student in ye profesion of ye ancient craft of building," and runs thus:—"Advice to ye young student in ye profession of ye ancient craft of building and architecture, whereby ye youth may betimes become truthful in ye representation of ye great works of ye glorious ancient cities of Athens and of Rome, and may (with ye guide hand of ye committee of taste) build up works of ye modern tymes, which never was hereto seen before.

Imprimis,—Make ye elevation and ye view in ye perspective well colored in ye most brilliant colors; ye sky, with ye flitting cloudes, and ye four-ground, studded with ye regimento's of gay and valient soldiers, nor be unmindful of ye good kynges carrige, with his prancing horses and running footmen, all of which do give life and great gaiety to ye scene, and cause great attraction to ye gentlemen of ye committee.

Secondo,—Ye elevation thus complete, trust to ye success with ye committee, for though be it they advertize for ye plans, ye sections, ye estimates, and ye &c. &cs., they are of a verity more taken with ye regimento of gay and valient soldiers, than the plain lines, ye angles and right angles, which doth show ye great sence and ye accommodation within ye building.

Terzzo,—Oblige ye committee with ye estimate on ye lowest terms, and when ye walls rise and ye genius is made thereby apparent; slight mention may be signified of hasty estimates, difficulties unforeseen, and exceeding great delays, which ye committee will duly consider and may be tack on 2½ per cent. extra, if not screw it from ye builder, &c. &c."

NEW OMNIBUS ASSOCIATION.

We are glad to find that our efforts of late to prepare the public mind for a reform of the omnibus system, so soon as the Exhibition harvest was at an end, have not been unavailing. Our last week's proposal the daily papers did us the honour to lay before those interested on Saturday, and a preliminary meeting of omnibus proprietors, on Monday, numerously attended, led to another, which resolved to establish the 2d. fares suggested by us, along with the 3d. and 4d. ones, and for these purposes, to form a new association for working the various routes at the reduced fares. The first route to be opened will be from Bayswater to Tottenham-court-road, 2d.; thence to Bank, 2d.; second route from Great Western Railway, at Paddington, to Great Northern at King's-cross, 3d.; and from Yorkshire Stingo to King's-cross, 2d. Mr. Crawford, the originator of the Hungerford and Camden-town lines, pointed out that on every 100 omnibuses such fares must yield a profit of 30,035*l.* per annum, though only half full,—66,435*l.*, if two-thirds full,—84,635*l.*, if three-fourths full, and 139,235*l.*, if full! The expense of working each omnibus he estimated at 2*l.* 0s. 9d. a day. The rules have been all agreed to. We may here add, that we perceive, too, by an advertisement in the *Times*, that our suggestion of a *penny* omnibus has been also taken up, and that the route on which it is to be tried is along Oxford-street, from Edgware-road to Tottenham-court-road. The public should support any respectable scheme whereby the old monopoly under which they were so lately tricked on false pretences may be overthrown. We hope something will also be done for the introduction of improved vehicles, but we fear that the three hundred now said to be "laid up in ordinary" form a rather formidable obstacle to immediate reform in this respect. We observe, from the *Glasgow Examiner*, that four "elegant, substantial, and commodious" new ones have been built there for Liverpool. Surely we shall not be allowed to be long behind Glasgow and Liverpool in this respect. ——Mr. J. B. Lyall, of Brompton, writes us

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